THE PEACE OF KARLOWITZ

BY
WILLIAM BRUCE MUNSON
A.B., University of Illinois, 1936
M.A., University of Illinois, 1937

THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN
HISTORY IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer wishes to express his indebtedness to Professor Albert Howe Lybyer whose wide knowledge, critical advice, and constant encouragement has contributed much to this thesis.

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The study of the decline of empires is a fascinating and important subject. It is one that has received much attention by historians in the past. In view of this fact it is strange that so little attention has been paid to the decline of one of the world's greatest empires: at its height the Ottoman Empire rivalled in extent and population the Roman. Part of this lack of interest is undoubtedly caused by the manifold linguistic difficulties in the way of an aspiring student. If this obstacle be overcome, one finds that the printed documentary sources are scarce and scattered. Yet the rewards will be rich, for in the story of the decline of the Ottoman Empire lies a field that, except in a few places, has been worked only on the surface.

This thesis does not, however, aspire to be a study of the whole decline of that Empire. It is the author's hope that in detailing the foreign relations of the Ottoman power with western Europe from 1683 to 1699 he has been able to show how that decline appeared from the outside. No attempt has been made to investigate causes. But perhaps in showing how it appeared to the world a partial answer has been given to the why. It is also hoped that this study will throw more light upon the diplomatic history of western Europe in the period. It is the writer's firm conviction that the events in eastern Europe had an important bearing upon those in western Europe. Inextricably bound up with the whole play of power politics are the rivalries of the western powers in the Near East. It will be seen that no major European power was disinterested in the struggle of these years.

The year 1682 found eastern Europe at peace. By a treaty signed at Vasvar in 1664 between the Ottoman Empire and the Holy Roman Empire peace had been guaranteed for twenty years. But that peace was not to last. Kara Mustafa, who had become grand vezir in 1676, had resolved to attack Vienna. The occasion for breaking the treaty of Vasvar presented itself when Emeric Tekeli of Hungary revolted against the Imperial government. Finding the Hapsburg arms too strong, he made an appeal to the Ottomans. Although the issue was debated, the Divan decided upon war. A large army was raised and Kara Mustafa led it into Hungary.

The attack came at a time when the Hapsburgs were singularly unprepared. Attempts had been made by Caprara, the Imperial ambassador to the Porte, to avert the war, but they had come to naught. An alliance was hastily made with Poland.

When the Moslem army appeared before Vienna the city had been prepared for a siege. Most of the noble and wealthy families had departed from the apparently doomed city. The garrison managed to stave off the Ottoman attacks until the arrival of King John Sobieski. Sobieski not only relieved the city but drove the Ottoman army back to Parkany, where still another defeat was administered to it. Thus was inaugurated a war that was to last for sixteen years.

The defeat of the Turks at Vienna was marked by rejoicing throughout all Christendom. Leopold, pious Christian that he was, viewed the situation realistically. A war with the Ottomans was sure to give Louis XIV an opportunity to advance French interests. Yet the opportunity afforded by the Ottoman defeat could not be neglected. To strengthen himself Leopold cast about for allies. Venice, who still smarted from the wounds of the Candian war of 1659, was the most likely possibility. Diplomatic maneuvers were soon under way and the result was that Venice joined a league (henceforth known as the Holy League) against the Ottomans. The league bound all parties to make no separate peace. Negotiations were also on foot to bring Persia into the war, but there no success was attained. More successful were the negotiations with Russia. Tsar Peter, covetous of Azof, joined the Holy League on the same terms as the others in April, 1687.

The spectacle of three Christian powers combined against them filled the Turks with apprehension. They, too, sought to win friends. France, a friend of long standing, was treated with special consideration, and Russia was granted concessions. In 1685 and 1686, after military defeats, the Ottomans attempted to make peace with the Emperor. These attempts were rebuffed by the Austrians.

Meanwhile a diplomatic contest for the favor of the Ottoman vassal states was in progress. Adding threats to promises, the Imperialists were able to force Apasy, voyvode of Transvylvania, into their camp. Poland attempted to lure the Tatars from the Ottomans, but no success was attained. In Moldavia Constantine Cantemir refused to join the Polish forces.

The early years of the war were marked by Christian successes on

two fronts. The Austrians captured Buda, long a citadel of Islam in Hungary. In 1687 the cross and crescent met at Mohacs in Hungary. The result was a terrible Ottoman defeat which made the Turks fear the Austrians in an open battle. Venice succeeded in wresting most of the Morea from the Ottoman grasp. Not so fortunate were the campaigns of Poland and Russia. King John, hampered by the diet, was unable to take Kamenets, particular object of Polish conquest. However, he did attain a foothold in Moldavia. The Russian campaign was a complete fiasco, the huge army retreating because of lack of food before ever engaging the Ottomans.

The reverses of the war, internal dissension, and the straitened financial condition, resolved the Porte to make a serious attempt to end the war. In 1688 Sulfikar Effendi and Alexander Mavrocordato were sent to Vienna to achieve that purpose. At Vienna a long series of conferences was inaugurated. Leopold, fearing French activity, might have made a peace; but Venice and Poland, neither of whom had achieved their desires, wished to keep Austria in the war. French influence at the Porte was thrown against the conclusion of peace. When it became apparent that peace might be made, Louis XIV invaded the Rhineland. Led on by hopes of regaining their lost territories, the Turks were now as unyielding as had been the allies earlier.

The failure of Sulfikar's embassy to achieve peace did not mean the abandonment of peace negotiations. The work of arranging a peace was carried on by the Dutch and English acting in close cooperation. The Dutch had sought to oppose the French at the Porte since 1683, but nothing much had been accomplished. The entrance of England into the peace mediations dated from the revolution of 1688, when English commercial interests came into conjunction with the political interests of William III. William Hussey was appointed as mediator. He journeyed to Vienna, where after numerous conferences with the Imperial ministers he was authorized to attempt to negotiate a peace on the basis of *uti possidetis*. There was little possibility that he would succeed. At Vienna most of the court was opposed to a peace with the Turks. Mustafa Köprülü, the grand vezir, was known to be an uncompromising foe of the peace party in the Divan. While Hussey was in Adrianople the grand vezir fell on the field of Salankamen. But before Hussey could take advantage of the situation he contracted the plague and died, bringing about a halt in the negotiations. Whitehall immediately ap-

pointed William Harbord to carry on Hussey's work. Harbord obtained the same powers as Hussey from the Emperor. Bad luck pursued the English for no sooner had Harbord reached Belgrade than he too died. Having no immediate successor available, William now empowered Heemskeerke, the Dutch ambassador at Vienna, to continue the negotiations. Heemskeerke was received at Belgrade and his propositions were examined. They were pronounced to be injurious to the Ottoman Empire and he was told that he must proceed to Adrianople to receive an answer.

Meanwhile the French did everything within their power to hamper these peace movements. At the Porte three methods were employed: to extend actual aid to the Turks; to magnify the success of the French in the war; and to prevent by all means, fair or foul, the negotiations of the English. French engineers, gunners, and physicians were in the Ottoman army. Food supplies were sent to Constantinople. To defeat the English and Dutch negotiations, large bribes were given to members of the Divan. Parallel to this policy was the detachment of Poland from the Holy League. If a peace could be arranged between the Porte and Poland, the Ottoman opposition to Leopold would become more effective. Accordingly the French tried to raise up a peace party in the Polish diet. Although unable to detach Poland they did succeed in hampering Sobieski's pursual of the war to such an extent that it was ineffective.

So important did William III consider the conclusion of peace between the Emperor and the Sultan that he appointed William Paget, English ambassador at Vienna, to fulfill that object. Paget reached Adrianople in February 1693. His propositions were based on the principle of *uti possidetis*. Favorably received by both the grand vezir and the Sultan, Paget was optimistic of his chances of success. But he was soon disillusioned. In a meeting of the high governmental officials the propositions that Heemskeerke had submitted at Belgrade were read. They had been worked over by the *reis-effendi* until they appeared extremely exorbitant. The purpose was to incite the people to a continuance of the war. Despite his every effort Paget was unable to undo the harm caused by this action. From 1693 to 1697 Paget could accomplish little.

In 1697 the Ottoman army suffered a crushing defeat at Zenta. The immediate result was a strengthening of the peace party in the

Divan. They argued that it was better to make peace while they retained something, than to risk the entire Empire by a continuance of the war. Led by Hussein Köprülü, the new grand vezir, the Divan determined to open peace negotiations. The matter was difficult because they had formerly shown themselves so unyielding. A series of conversations between Paget and Mavrocordato, first interpreter of the Porte, resulted in a definite peace proposition by the Porte. It accepted the principle of *uti possidetis,* with one exception, as the basis of the projected peace. Paget forwarded the proposition to England and Vienna. Vienna replied that Russia must be included in the propositions and rejected the Ottoman clause about Siebenbürgen. Both Venice and Austria were desirous of peace. The former was nearly exhausted by the long war and could hope to retain her conquests only by a common peace. The latter was anxious about the Spanish question and wished to be free to thwart the ambition of the Bourbon. However, neither Poland nor Russia desired the war to end. Neither had attained its objectives, nor was there any possibility of doing so on the basis of *uti possidetis.* Poland desired Kamenets, and Russia wished to have Kertsch as a guarantee of its possession of Azof. Accordingly each tried to oppose the peace. In the end, however, the evident intention of the Emperor to conclude a peace without them and the probability that they could attain more in the peace than out of it forced them to acquiesce.

By concluding the peace of Ryswick with his enemy, Louis XIV had apparently given his tacit consent to the settlement of the war between the Emperor and the Sultan. Such was not the case. French policy still sought to oppose the conclusion of peace in eastern Europe. Bribery was resorted to in Constantinople, but the Turks had become convinced that Louis intended to desert them and therefore refused to listen to the French promises. In Poland the French attempted to secure the election of the Prince of Conti to the Polish throne vacated by Sobieski's death. They secured the election of Conti only to lose it by his slowness and indecision. Augustus of Saxony seized the throne and thus Conti lost a kingdom and France lost a counterweight to the Imperial influence in Eastern Europe.

A very great factor in bringing about the Turkish desire for peace was the series of military reverses the Ottomans continued to suffer from 1688 to 1699. In 1688 the Austrians captured Belgrade, only to lose it two years later to Mustafa Köprülü, who temporarily revived the

Ottoman military power. His successes were nullified by the battle of Salankamen. Here the Turks were severely defeated and the grand vezir killed. The climax of the war was the battle of Zenta, where once again the Ottomans were crushingly beaten by the Austrians under Prince Eugene of Savoy. The year 1688 was the high tide of Venetian success. Although after that year the Venetians took Monemvasia and temporarily held Chios they were fortunate to retain their initial conquests. Poland during these years was barely able to defend herself against the Tatar raids. Russia, however, undertook a campaign in 1696 which resulted in the capture of Azof. Fear of Russian expansion was one of the factors which made the Divan desire peace in 1697.

Once it was decided to make peace, the course of events moved swiftly. The Porte had already appointed its representatives and Vienna and Venice hastened to do the same. Only Poland and Russia were dilatory about appointing plenipotentiaries, still wishing to prolong the war.

The representatives of the Ottoman Empire were Mehmed Rami, reis-effendi or secretary of state, and Alexander Mavrocordato, interpreter for the Porte. The former was an intelligent, learned and gifted man, noted for his prudent conduct and studied elegance in dress. The latter was an opportunist who came to Karlowitz intent upon advancing his own interest. To an excellent education was added a native cunning and slyness which made him an excellent choice to further Ottoman interests.

Counts Wolfgang von Öttigen and Leopold Schlick were chosen to represent the Emperor at the conference. The appointment of both of these men was unexpected. Öttigen was a man of few gifts, inclined to attribute dishonest motives to everyone's actions. Schlick was a man of considerable insight. This faculty, coupled with the wide and diverse knowledge which he had gained by constant reading, enabled him to give a good account of himself at Karlowitz.

Count Stanislaus Malakowski and Prokop Bogdanowitz-Wosnitzin represented Poland and Russia respectively at Karlowitz. Malakowski was a vain man and soon won the dislike of the other members of the congress by the extravagant claims he advanced for Poland. Wosnitzin was equally unpopular. Ruzzini, the Italian plenipotentiary, found in him some of the "unclean genius of that nation." His utterances and

conduct were unruly and crude. In other words, by Venetian standards he was not a gentleman.

Signore Carlo Ruzzini, the Venetian ambassador at Vienna, was sent to Karlowitz by the Republic. His intelligence and ability are reflected in his account of the conference.

William Paget and Jacob Collier, the two mediators, rounded out the personnel of the congress. Both Paget and Collier were excellent choices for the positions. Both knew Turkish and understood the customs of the Turks. Because of these qualities they were able to smooth and facilitate the negotiations.

Toward the end of October the Ottoman and allied plenipotentiaries assembled at Karlowitz. By November 6 all had agreed upon the preliminary rules which were to govern the conference. A delay in the formal opening was caused by the refusal of the Russian delegation to submit their demands in writing to the mediators. However, by November 13 all disputes had been settled and the congress was formally opened.

The Imperial and Turkish representatives were the first to undertake to settle their difficulties. The negotiations went smoothly with the exception of those concerning the Banate of Temesvar. Here the Turks possessed the city, but the Austrians held the surrounding country. After several stormy meetings the Imperialists capitulated and ceded the Banate to the Ottomans. The treaty in its final form, composed of twenty articles, was to last for twenty five years. By it the Emperor added Transylvania, nearly all of Hungary, and part of Slavonia to his dominions.

After determining the boundaries of Austria and Turkey, Mavrocordato expressed the wish to confer with the Venetians. The conference attained no result. The Turks required the demolition of Lepanto, and the evacuation of the Dardanelles, the Morea, and Prevesa. Ruzzini rejected these demands and complained loudly of the pretensions of the Turks.

Conferences with the Russians and the Poles followed. With Russia no agreement could be reached, and finally Wosnitzin offered the Turks an armistice, which was to last for two years. The conferences with Poland brought the desired result. By their treaty the Poles gained more territory than their participation in the war warranted. Kamenets, Podolia, and the Ukraine were ceded by the Ottomans to

the Poles. In return Poland agreed to withdraw all of the garrisons from Moldavia.

It remained to adjust the difficulties between the Porte and Venice. The core of the dispute was the delimitation of the boundary of the Morea. The Turks refused to concede anything beyond the Hexamillion. Venice claimed that in order to safeguard the possession of the Morea she should be ceded territory beyond the Hexamillion, extending to certain mountains upon the mainland side of the isthmus of Corinth. Paget attempted to bring about an adjustment but with no success. Discouraged and fearing that the work of the congress might come to naught, he asked Sutton, the English ambassador at Vienna, to attempt to bring about an adjustment there. Sutton was unable to shake the Venetian stand. Meanwhile at Karlowitz the Venetians and Turks met on January 4, 1699, for another conference. After a violent debate Ruzzini agreed to accept the Ottoman boundary of the Morea, with the evacuation of Lepanto. Upon the other points no agreement could be reached and the situation was again stalemated. Paget again had recourse to Vienna. This time Sutton obtained Kinsky's support, and the Venetian ambassador was told that if Venice did not come to an agreement with the Turks the treaties would be signed without her. At Karlowitz the plenipotentiaries agreed to fix a period of sixteen days for the ending of the conference. Such pressure forced Ruzzini to come to an agreement. Venice knew that she could not long retain her gains without Imperial support.

The Turko-Venetian treaty provided for the cession to Venice of the Morea up to the Hexamillion. Lepanto was to be evacuated by the Venetians and the castles of the Dardanelles and of Corinth were to be razed. The fortifications of Prevesa were to be demolished and the islands of the archipelago were to return to their status before the war. Venice received the Dalmatian coast, demarcated by a boundary which ran from Knin to Ciclut. This treaty was only provisionally accepted at Karlowitz. Final confirmation came in September, 1699.

All was now ready for the formal signing of the treaty. On the morning of January 26 all of the plenipotentiaries, except Ruzzini, assembled in the conference house. Because Mehmed Rami declared the hour to be unfavorable according to the stars they waited until 11:45. Promptly upon the moment the treaties were signed.

After waiting several days, which were passed by feasting and

entertaining, the plenipotentiaries departed. Paget and Collier went to Belgrade to await the exchange of ratifications between the Emperor and the Sultan. On March 14 at Salankamen the ratifications were exchanged and the treaty of Karlowitz formally accepted.

The Treaty of Karlowitz was one of the most noteworthy and important treaties that had ever been signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Christian states of Europe. It ended seventeen years of bloody war. From that standpoint alone it was important. There were other implications of the treaty of far reaching significance in defining the status of the European powers as the eighteenth century opened.

First of all it provided a definite outward manifestation of the inward decay that was rotting the Ottoman Empire. Although that decay can be traced back at least to the end of the reign of Süleyman, the Magnificent, it had not been evident to the rest of Europe heretofore. Never before had the Turks signed a treaty to definitely disadvantageous. Never before had they given up territory without stipulating and receiving an annual tribute in return for it. Nor had they ever before accepted the mediation of other powers. At Karlowitz the fact that they agreed to make peace without the usual conditions showed the extent of the exhaustion of the Empire. The amount of territory alone that they lost was vivid testimony of the weakness of the power that once terrified all Christendom.

Nor were the powers of Europe long in recognizing that the Turkish might had become a myth. From 1699 may be dated the origin of the question of the Near East. It was evident after this treaty that the Ottoman Empire could no longer resist her European rivals. The question henceforth was not how to curb the power of the Crescent; instead it became a question of what parts of the Crescent each nation should receive. Chateauneuf, the French ambassador to the Porte throughout most of this period, saw the situation clearly. In his report to Louis XIV made at the end of his mission he wrote:

> "Finally if the Providence which has prescribed the birth and the duration of a most powerful monarchy should decree the end of the Turks in Europe in the reign of your Majesty, his Majesty knows that he cannot dispense to take the means not to become a simple spectator to the partition the other princes will make between them of the debris of that Empire."

Thus the European dominions of the Padishah became an incubator of future trouble between the powers of Europe. Here, perhaps, there

is no better illustration of the working of the balance of power. As illustrated by Chateauneuf's words, no European power could afford to let itself be excluded from participation in the spoils. It may be that for the subsequent welfare of the people of the region and for the future of the nations of Europe it would have been better had the Ottoman Empire retained enough power effectively to resist its enemies.

The treaty was of vital significance to the nations of western Europe. England, Holland, France, Spain, the German states, and Austria were all affected by it. Certainly if the peace had not been established between the Emperor and the Sultan, the war of the Spanish Succession might have had far different results. Between 1683 and 1689, when Austria and France were at peace, Leopold had been able to pursue the war with vigor. When it became apparent to Louis XIV that his eastern ally would collapse unless aided, he broke the peace of Ratisbon. It was hoped by the French that the Turks could make sufficient gains to prolong the war many years. But the war did not last long enough for Louis' purposes. When he made the peace of Ryswick in order to turn his attention to the question of the Spanish succession, the Ottoman Empire was soon forced to follow suit. Not only were the Austrian gains preserved, but Leopold was set free to turn his arms against France. Indeed, his armies were scarcely demobilized before he was at war with France. England had two vital interests in the peace. From the standpoint of trade, peace was a necessity. But above all, peace was necessary if William III was to carry through his desire to thwart the ambition of Louis XIV. The Spanish question was one of life and death to William as ruler of Holland. Acquisition of Spain by the Bourbon would imply the eventual absorption of Holland. William could not hope to stand alone against France. Therefore he must do all in his power to secure allies, and when those allies had been secured, to make sure that they would oppose France with all their force. It is little wonder that the English diplomats worked so unceasingly for peace between the Emperor and the Sultan. Thus one sees a paradox. Peace on the eastern front meant war on the western.

Considered from the phase of pure acquisition of territory, the Treaty of Karlowitz was the most memorable that the Christian powers had ever concluded with the Ottoman Empire. Every member of the Holy League acquired some territory. Austria, as befitted her part in the war, acquired the most. In 1699 the dominions of Leopold were

essentially those of the Austria-Hungary of 1914. The peace of Karlowitz confirmed Austria as a Balkan power. Venice wrested a large amount of territory from the Ottoman Empire. But Venice had long since passed her peak of power and was not long to retain the advantages she gained in the peace. Poland secured provinces which she had long desired. But like those of Venice, the Polish acquisitions were to mean little. The inherent instability of her government was to make other powers the beneficiaries of her activity in the war. Perhaps most significant were the comparatively small acquisitions of Russia, which were confirmed by treaty at Constantinople in July 1700. Coupled with the Russian drive to the Baltic they marked the emergence of Russia as a European power. Although Peter was later forced to relinquish Azof, the succeeding rulers of Russia did not forget that they had once possessed that city. Expansion to the Mediterranean became a definite objective of Russian foreign policy.

Finally, the Peace of Karlowitz marked the entrance of the Ottoman Empire into the European state system. Since that time, Turkey has tended continually to throw in her lot with the European states. One might say that Turkey became definitely more European than Asiatic. The years of battle and the extensive negotiations preceding the Treaty of Karlowitz offer ample evidence of the influence of the European powers upon the Ottoman government. Down to the present that influence, rather than diminishing, has increased.

VITA

William Bruce Munson was born at Richland, Illinois, June 23, 1913. He attended the elementary and secondary schools of New Berlin, Illinois. In 1931 he enrolled as a student at Illinois College, Jacksonville, Illinois. In 1933 he entered the University of Illinois, giving special attention to history, philosophy, and political science. During his undergraduate career he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. The A. B., with highest honors, was received in June, 1936. In the spring of the same year he married Miss Marjorie Cekander of Urbana, Illinois. In the fall of 1936 he entered graduate study in history at the University of Illinois, receiving the M.A. in the summer of 1937. He was enabled to continue his study by an appointment as assistant in the History department. In the summer of 1938 he received a grant in aid from the American Council of Learned Societies for study in the Arabic and Turkish languages at Princeton University. Since receiving his Master's degree he has been engaged in study and teaching at the University of Illinois.